

BOOK REVIEWS

DISEASES OF THE EAR, NOSE, AND THROAT—A Textbook of Clinical and Laboratory Procedures—Georges Portmann, M.D., Professor of Otorhinolaryngology at the University of Bordeaux; Surgeon at the Hospital of Tondou, Bordeaux; Surgeon at the Hospital Leopold Bellan, Paris; translated by Fernand Montreuil, M.D., and Jules G. Waltner, M.D., College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, New York. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1951. 728 pages. \$20.00.

The name Georges Portmann, M.D., is well known to all otolaryngologists. It is hoped that his text, *Diseases of the Ear, Nose, and Throat*, will be equally well known. The volume is a veritable storehouse of information. As a textbook, it is by far the most worthwhile and usable one that has been made available in several years. It should be considered as a necessary volume in the library of all otolaryngologists. Furthermore, it should be kept handy and available so that it will be read and reread as time and necessity permit or demand.

These statements are made with the full realization that there are parts of both the contents and context that offer themselves for question and argument. Some areas demand direct criticism. The seven-page introduction would have been excellent if it had stopped at the first half of page one. The remaining six and one-half pages devoted to ways and means of obtaining external illumination add nothing to the knowledge of those who are familiar with a head mirror and supply nothing of value for those who might wish to pursue this speciality. For those orderly-minded readers, who habitually start at page one and diligently carry on through to the last page, this introduction could easily prove to be a deterring factor. It is unfortunate that such an excellent volume should have such poor introduction.

The chapters on anatomy of the various organs are excellent. Unfortunately, as much cannot be said for some of the illustrations. A number of them are time-worn ones that have appeared in practically every volume of anatomy or textbook on this subject that has been presented during the last half-century. It is unfortunate that so many of the better anatomical illustrations were printed with their original French nomenclature. In a number of instances, the reader has to refer to the following page to find a supplemental translation. A number of the illustrations could have been deleted without detracting, in any way, from the advantages of visual education. Specifically, Figure 458, a rather poor drawing, depicting a bare, naked trachea, is devoid of all labeling, other than a major caption. In many instances, the subject matter selected for presentation in color is not good. The reproductions of the color illustrations are not good according to our present standards.

The chapters on physiology are entirely too short. Such material as is presented is well chosen, well selected, and is presented in a clear manner. Further elaboration on the applied physiology would add much to the interest factor as well as direct attention to the importance of obtaining and maintaining normal function.

Much time and space have been devoted to the reproduction of roentgenograms. A number of these films have lost so much in reproduction that the ultimate product does not present, to even the trained eye, sufficient detail to warrant the use of the space they occupy in the book. The chapter devoted to laboratory methods in otolaryngology is an unfortunate mixture of simple and involved procedures as well as a heterogeneous collection of semi-antique and modern methods. This chapter could be eliminated, or if retained, should be revised so as to be of real value.

These several criticisms have been presented in the hope

that all who have the opportunity will read this volume carefully, and that these criticisms might act as a stimulation for this type of careful reading.

This review is presented with the idea of specifically recommending this textbook to all who are interested in the field of otolaryngology. The volume should be of some interest to the general practitioner and to the general surgeon. The present cost might seem to put it in the luxury class. The quality and caliber of the material presented is well worth the expenditure.

* * *

RENAL PELVIS AND URETER—Peter A. Narath, M.D., F.I.C.S., Adjunct Professor of Urology, New York Polyclinic Medical School and Hospital. Grune and Stratton, New York, 1951. 429 pages. \$12.50.

Narath's book is of great interest to the student of urology, whether he is still in the medical school or whether he has been practicing urology for many years. It is a capitulation of the scientific data related to the normal pelvis and ureter. It is exceedingly thorough and presents much that is original with the author.

The book is of a size that readily fits the hand, it is easy to read, with clear type printed on a good grade of paper. There are a large number of illustrations, many of them descriptive, and schematic drawings. Numerous pyelograms, which are, in most cases, well defined, depict the normal upper urinary tract and aid in explaining its anatomy and function.

There are chapters on the normal pelvis, its structure and histology. The dynamics of the upper urinary tract, together with the various aspects of absorption and resorption are dealt with in detail.

Anomalies and malformations and some aspects of the various types of extravasation are dealt with briefly, but, in general, there is a noticeable lack of discussion of the numerous pathologic changes which would seem to be natural for this book. Most physicians today, the reviewer included, consult a text of this type primarily for help in understanding or clearing up some puzzling pathologic condition. On the other hand, this book completely fulfills what it claims to be, a study of the normal upper urinary tract.

* * *

GROUPING, TYPING AND BANKING OF BLOOD—Otakar Jaroslav Pollak, M.D., Ph.D., F.A.C.P., Director, Blood Bank, Chief, Departments of Anatomical, Clinical and Experimental Pathology, Quincy City Hospital, Quincy, Mass. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1951. 163 pp. \$5.75.

Pollak's new book, "Grouping, Typing and Banking of Blood," fulfills the publisher's foreword, "The complex subject of immunohematology and the banking of blood are covered in simple language that will keep the reader's attention to the end."

This book contains only 163 pages; however, each page and each line is stripped of unessential detail, thereby giving the volume compactness of text, clarity of thought, and a progressive documentation of facts which make it a real joy to read.

Many authors might easily become swamped by minutiae when dealing with such intricate problems, tests and checks. Pollak, however, leads the reader to the next page in a most convincing but simple manner. I particularly liked his treatment of "Sources of error in blood grouping." It is a "must" for all who carry out such important work. The three chapters on "Blood Banks" follow the prevalent trend of thought, but they also sharpen the picture and bring into proper focus this most modern adjunct of medicine.